

12/04/2026 Daily Current Affairs

1. *Mahatma Phule:*

Context: Prime Minister Shri Narendra Modi paid homage to Mahatma Phule in the Parliament complex on the occasion of his birth anniversary.

About Mahatma Phule:

- ❖ Born on 11 April 1827 in present-day Maharashtra, belonged to the Mali caste.
- ❖ Educated at Scottish Missionary High School, Pune (1841).
- ❖ Ideology based on Liberty, Equality (Egalitarianism), and Social Justice (Socialism).
- ❖ Influenced by Thomas Paine's book *The Rights of Man*.
- ❖ Advocated education of women and lower castes as the key to social reform.
- ❖ Founded Satyashodhak Samaj (1873) to promote social equality.
- ❖ Major works: *Gulamgiri* (1873), *Shetkarayacha Aasud* (1881), *Tritiya Ratna* (1855).
- ❖ Served as Commissioner of Poona Municipality till 1883.
- ❖ Conferred the title "Mahatma" in 1888 by Vithalrao Krishnaji Vandekar.
- ❖ Along with Savitribai Phule, started the first indigenous girls' school in Pune (1848).
- ❖ Strong advocate of women's education and gender equality.
- ❖ Established schools for girls (by 1852); later closed due to post-1857 financial crisis.
- ❖ Worked for widow welfare and supported widow remarriage.
- ❖ Criticized orthodox Brahminical practices and caste hierarchy.
- ❖ Built a common water tank (1868) open to all castes.
- ❖ Early proponent of abolition of untouchability and caste system.
- ❖ Considered among the first to use the term "Dalit" for oppressed classes.
- ❖ Inspired leaders like B. R. Ambedkar and Mahatma Gandhi.

2. *Kuno National Park:*

Context: Indian-born Female Cheetah at Kuno National Park gives Birth to Four Cubs in the Wild; a Historic Moment in India's Cheetah Conservation Journey.

About Kuno National Park:

- ❖ Kuno National Park is a national park and wildlife sanctuary in the Gwalior Chambal region of Madhya Pradesh, India. It derives its name from the Kuno River.
- ❖ Location: Situated in Sheopur district of Madhya Pradesh, near the Vindhyan Hills.
- ❖ History: Established as a Wildlife Sanctuary (1981) and upgraded to a National Park in 2018.
- ❖ Area & River: Covers ~750 sq. km; named after the Kuno River (tributary of Chambal River) dividing the park into two parts.
- ❖ Terrain & Ecosystem: Features plateaus, valleys, and seasonal rivers, creating diverse habitats.
- ❖ Vegetation: Dominated by tropical dry deciduous forests, savannah grasslands, and riverine forests.
- ❖ Biodiversity: Home to species like leopard, sloth bear, wolf, striped hyena, dhole, and 120+ bird species.

- ❖ Conservation Significance: Selected for Asiatic Lion Reintroduction Project and Cheetah Reintroduction Project in India, with 20 cheetahs introduced (2022–23).

About Cheetah Reintroduction Programme:

- ❖ Project Cheetah is the world's first intercontinental large wild carnivore translocation project.
- ❖ The project aimed at the reintroduction of Cheetahs in the country which had become extinct in the country.
- ❖ The project involves translocation of cheetahs from source countries in Africa.
- ❖ Kuno National Park in Madhya Pradesh has been chosen as the first reintroduction site due to its suitable grasslands and prey base.
- ❖ The first batch of eight cheetahs (five females and three males) arrived in India from South Africa in September 2022.
- ❖ In February 2023, an additional 12 cheetahs were translocated from South Africa under an agreement for further introductions over the next 8-10 years.
- ❖ On February 28, 2026, nine cheetahs (six females and three males) arrived from Botswana under Project Cheetah.

3. *Standing Deposit Facility (SDF):*

Context: Indian lenders have parked a record amount of 5.6 lakh crores in the RBI's Standing Deposit Facility (SDF).

What is a Standing Deposit Facility (SDF)?

- ❖ Introduced by Reserve Bank of India in April 2022 to manage liquidity.
- ❖ Used to absorb excess liquidity from commercial banks.
- ❖ No collateral required, unlike reverse repo (no government securities involved).
- ❖ Acts as the floor of the Liquidity Adjustment Facility (LAF) corridor, replacing reverse repo.
- ❖ Allows banks to park surplus funds with RBI and earn interest, especially during liquidity surplus.

4. *Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, and ocean Ecosystem (PACE) satellite:*

Context: Recent findings reveal that NASA's Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, and ocean Ecosystem (PACE) satellite can now detect nitrogen dioxide pollution at a highly refined scale.

About Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, and ocean Ecosystem (PACE) satellite:

- ❖ Full Form: Plankton, Aerosol, Cloud, and ocean Ecosystem (PACE) mission by NASA.
- ❖ Launch: Launched in February 2024 into a Sun-synchronous orbit.
- ❖ Objective: Studies ocean biology, aerosols, and clouds to understand Earth's climate system.
- ❖ Unique Feature: Provides hyperspectral global coverage every 1–2 days (first of its kind).
- ❖ Primary Instrument: Ocean Color Instrument (OCI) – measures ocean colour from UV to shortwave infrared.
- ❖ Advanced Capability: Offers higher wavelength resolution than earlier satellites, improving climate data records.

- ❖ Polarimeters: Equipped with SPEXone and HARP2 to study light polarization affected by clouds, aerosols, and oceans.
- ❖ Applications: Helps analyse plankton, air particles, fisheries health, algal blooms, pollution, and wildfire smoke.
- ❖ Climate Role: Enhances understanding of ocean–atmosphere interactions and climate change impacts.

5. *Windfall gains tax:*

Context: With global crude prices still elevated, the Finance Ministry on Saturday hiked the windfall gains tax on export bound diesel and aviation turbine fuel (ATF) by 158% and 42%, respectively, with immediate effect.

What is the Windfall gains tax?

- ❖ A windfall tax is a higher tax imposed on specific industries when they make unusual and above-average profits.
- ❖ A higher tax on abnormal or super-normal profits earned by certain industries.
- ❖ “Windfall” refers to unexpected gains not due to business effort.
- ❖ Levied when profits arise from external factors like wars, pandemics, or policy changes.
- ❖ Targets sectors like oil, gas, and mining with sudden profit surges.
- ❖ Not linked to investment, innovation, or expansion by firms.
- ❖ Can also apply to inheritance, lottery, or game-show winnings.
- ❖ Aims to redistribute excess profits for public welfare.
- ❖ Justified as gains arise from favourable external conditions, not company efficiency.
- ❖ Acts as a supplementary revenue source for governments.

Quick Bites:

- ☐ In a significant milestone for quality-assured healthcare under the Ministry of Ayush, the Clinical Laboratory at the Central Ayurveda Research Institute (CARI), Bengaluru, has been awarded ISO 15189:2022 accreditation for both Biochemistry and Haematology—becoming the first institute under the Central Council for Research in Ayurvedic Sciences (CCRAS) to achieve this distinction.
- ☐ India’s seafood exports have recorded strong and sustained growth, expanding at an average annual rate of 7% over the past 11 years. Marine product exports have more than doubled during the period, rising from ₹30,213 crore in 2013-14 to ₹62,408 crore in 2024-25, driven largely by shrimp exports valued at ₹43,334 crore.
- ☐ Recently, Vice-President of India, released the updated version of the Constitution of India in Sindhi language. Sindhi is one of the 22 official languages enlisted in the Eighth Schedule of the Constitution. Sindhi language was added by the 21st Constitutional Amendment Act 1967. Indian Constitution, the world’s longest-written constitution, was originally drafted in English. Constituent Assembly then formed a Translation Committee led by Ghansyam Das Gupta to translate the Constitution into Hindi.
- ☐ McGill University study finds high microbial methane emissions from inactive oil wells Microbial (biogenic) methane is methane gas produced by microorganisms, specifically archaea known as

methanogens — through the decomposition of organic matter in oxygen-depleted (anaerobic) environments.

- ☐ The Government has extended the Minimum Import Price (MIP) for natural honey, which is a trade policy measure used to protect domestic producers. Minimum Import Price (MIP) is a temporary mechanism that sets a floor price on imports, ensuring that goods cannot be imported below a specified price.

-----The END-----